

REMARKS

*Interview
revised
OK
SW*

Applicant's Attorney thanks the Examiner in charge of the instant case for the courtesy of the interview held on January 26, 2005 wherein this case was discussed at length. This amendment includes the changes discussed at the interview and is believed to place the case in condition for allowance.

The indication of allowability of claims 16 and 17 is acknowledged. Allowed claim 17 has been retained in this amendment and claim 16 rewritten in independent form as new claim 24. Moreover, the language of claim 24 has been clarified to correct the ambiguity pointed out by the Examiner at the interview. It is respectfully submitted that claim 24 should now be allowable.

Generic claim 1 has been amended herein to more specifically define the features thereof. Thus, amended claim 1 now specifies

- top and bottom elongated recessed cylindrical bands above and below the panels,
- the discontinuities in the top band are each positioned over a central portion of an adjacent vacuum panel,
- the top band extends over the major portion of an adjacent vacuum panel, and
- more uniform flexing is provided in the vacuum panels.